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Some of the Best Illinois High School Poetry of 1956

PAULENE M. YATES, *Maine Township High School, Park Ridge*

Peace is a puppy saturated in sleep,
His tummy comfortably filled with warm milk.
The accustomed odors of oatmeal and shredded newspaper
Linger in his stubborn woolly hair.
Peace is the length of time a pup's eager, sensitive body is at rest.
Peace is the full moon riding like a luminous spider
on a web of clouds,
A militia of cattails gracefully drilling to the rhythm of a zephyr,
The ease of a bird's wing slicing a summer sky,
A contented heart.

Torment is the emerging of a homeless mongrel
Out of the thickets of night.
Violent brooms of wind sweep his mangy hair on end,
Icily grazing his gaunt ribs.
Torment is his torpid glare at the world.
Torment is the haggard faces of the impoverished,
The racking blur of fever,
The staining talons of a vulture,
A conflicting heart.

(Editor's note: Because so many exceptionally good poems were submitted by Illinois teachers this year, Miss Yates's task was even more difficult than usual. On account of limited space, the editor found it necessary to relegate to the Honorable Mention pages a number of poems that Miss Yates had hoped to include.)

Joy is a pup's frantic exertions at play,
 His leggy body bounding in wild haphazard circles.
 Wittily his pink tongue lolls between mischievous teeth.
 Impudently his eyes reflect fun as he catapults his body into
 the air.

Joy is a warm bed, a tantalizing morsel of food, the caress
 of a returning master.

Joy is tiny lightbulbs of dew fused by the sun,
 A magnitude of voices keyed to the national anthem,
 The love one possesses for another,
 A blissful heart.

Loneliness is an old dog drowsing to the hissing of a fire.
 His eyes, molten steel, reflect the pirouetting flames.
 A tremor cascades through his heavy body.
 A greying paw twitches in reverie.
 Loneliness is the time his beloved humans isolate him.
 Loneliness is a single shadow on the snow
 The bewitching vibrations of an owl,
 The descent of a shriveled, crackly autumn leaf,
 A dimming heart.

MARY K. TINGLEY, ninth, Evanston Twp. H. S.
 Elizabeth H. Bennett, teacher

THE BUTTERFLY

As gay and as free as the wind,
 Gliding, flitting,
 Darting from here to there,
 Glistening in the sunshine
 Like a diamond bedecked Fairy Queen
 Royally, daintily, hovering over her garden,
 Disappearing for a moment in the
 Depths of a flower,
 Then off again upon her merry way,
 A simple butterfly content with life.

NANCY SMITH, tenth, Rockford East Sr. H. S.
 Edna Youngquist, teacher

DEATH COMES

Peacefully as a snowfall, gentle death covers a life;
 It arrives serenely with the flowers of spring;
 Friendly death is the sun's rays on the shore,

Where a lapping wave carries sand back to the sea;
 Welcomed death comes with the scattering leaves,
 Drifting upon one as smoke from a great bonfire;
 Death weaves itself through the trees with a soft breeze.

Raging as a blizzard, violent death blinds a life;
 In a thunderstorm the lightning flashes this destiny;
 Death can take one as suddenly as a great tidal wave,
 Crashing onto the stones of life to carry them on;
 A whirling tornado takes life with its other debris;
 An earthquake strikes, leaving a gaping hole
 Into which death tumbles hard and abruptly.

Be it gentle as a soft, fluffy snowfall
 Or violent as a heavy blinding blizzard,
 Death comes finally to us all.

DIANE ROSS, eleventh, Sycamore H. S.
 Margaret Adams, teacher

SONG FOR A VERY YOUNG HEART

(Speak to me with the calico murmur of wind in the peach tree leaves;
 Speak to me with the taffeta whisper of wind in the tall corn sheaves;
 Speak to me with a velvety speaking; my heart knows what it believes.)

Wind in my hair and sun on my face—
 Earth is a beautiful, close-to-God place.
 I have the rain and the sun and the sky
 And the lonely magic of a night bird's cry.
 Now I have you, and you are a song
 And a joy and a breathlessness; my love is strong
 In its faith in the simple, unbreakable rule
 That lives in the world bound up by the pool
 Of your eyes, brown and deep. I am lost in your eyes.
 You are my race and my goal and my prize.
 Yet I could lose you without half a try
 If ever my world fell apart with a lie.

(Speak to me with the calico murmur of wind in the peach tree leaves;
 Speak to me with the taffeta whisper of wind in the tall corn sheaves;
 Speak to me with a velvety speaking; my heart knows what it believes.)

CAROL HASELEY, twelfth, Springfield H. S.
 Mary Virginia Lamson, teacher

ON THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

Hary Janos lifts his head;
 The dauntless Magyar is not dead;

Hary Janos shakes his fist
And breaks the shackles from his wrist.
Once this Magyar, strong and free,
Held, above all, liberty:
Napoleon fell before his sword;
Nations shook when Janos roared.

He rises from the reddened heel;
No more to despots will he kneel.
The conquering forces hear him cry,
"Give me freedom or let me die.
You've taken away my liberty;
Give it back and set me free!
On many battlefields have I bled,
And again I'll fight till I am dead
Or free to hold my head up high
And look Almighty in the eye
And say, 'Lord, now I'm free;
I've dearly won my liberty.'

"When I can look around my land
And see the work of God's own hand,
When I can look about my fields
And see the bounty of Nature's yields,
Free from the oppressors' chains,
Cleaned of all the bloody stains,
Then will I find lasting rest;
Then I can say, 'I've done my best.'"

GEORGE HOUSE, ninth, Maine Twp. H. S., Des Plaines
Judith Kidd, teacher

FOREST FIRE

The fire,
With its flashing eyes and flaming tongue,
Eats greedily at young and ancient trees alike.
Unconquerable
Until, at last, destroying itself by its own gluttony,
It begins to die.

The wasted forest and the dying fire
Mingle in ashes and smoke.
Here and there the fire flashes, one more grasp at life.

Then

All is past ; the forest lies dead.

The fire is gone.

It waits only for the forest to live again

To regain its own life.

JOHN WHITE, tenth, E. Rockford H. S.
Mary Hills, teacher

SNOW NIGHT

. scoop it, up
up to my coat
the snow of so much Lux flakes
and a hidden flame
with mica chips there on the lawn .

. and the snow on the alley in a dream
a spot of square yellow
and a pattern of black of the sewer
only speckle it, and make
me kneel on the jaundiced snow
and look at the window
whose glow I crouch in
only to see the rear stairs and
awkward ashcans tryingly
tossed there where instead a
Christchild should lie.

. see it! see it pour off
the rail as my mittened
finger skids along and
makes a waterfall of
snow. touch it. rub it
there between your fingers
push it against your eyes .

. quickly clap it up
there in the air
hide hide as it falls
wistfully winding wailing
wishing its way away from
where we are. but too put
your mitten over your mouth
so to hide the laugh

and smile at it for
snow is the loveliest death
and snow is sleek
and warm and snow will
love you back .

ANNE MINER, eleventh, Evanston Twp. H. S.
Malcolm Mosing, teacher

BLUE IS NOT A COLOR

Blue is not a color,
But a thought, a mood, a dream
In the breakers of an ocean
Or a frozen little stream.

The blue that is the heavens
Is the changing blue of light,
Silken blue at evening
And velvet blue at night.

There's the blue of blooming flowers
And the blue of kittens' eyes,
The soft grey-blue of valleys
Where the mist of morning lies.

ELIZABETH ROBERTS, twelfth, Urbana H. S.
Marien Seward, teacher

CHRISTMAS SCENE

The mist slowly rises up from the earth,
And the snowflakes come fluttering down,
Covering Nature's creations
With a white flowing gown.

Covering the world with silence,
So deep and white and still,
From the gaunt oak trees in the forest,
To the yellow grass on the hill.

Each pine, each fir, each hemlock tree,
Is decked out in jewels so fine.
Each with a coat of ermine white
Like kings in a ghostly line.

The river's gurgling is silent.
It flows quietly under the ice,
A silent winding ribbon
Held to its banks in a vise.

O, to look again upon this scene
Where peace and serenity reign,
Where the silence is unbroken
And the snow lies deep on the cane.

JOHN JEWETT, eighth, Plainfield Jr. H. S.
Rosa McArthur, teacher

THE WALL

I am looking at a blank wall.
To you, it is bare, and there is only the wall—
No one is standing by it.
But I see people there.
You cannot see them; they are not from your world.
They are the people of the World of Shadows.
They are not all alike,
Some are gay and happy, outwardly,
But when the masks of gaiety crack,
Their faces are as blank and expressionless
As the blank, barren wall before us.
Some never smile, never speak—
They stare at nothing in stony silence.
Some glare at you, silently sullen,
And scream at you when you speak to them.
Some are people of the Island of Dreams;
They are fugitives—
Refugees from the rocky desert of Reality.
These are all people of the World of Shadows—
The world where beauty and horror go hand-in-hand
And laughter walks side-by-side with tears,
Where insane dreams reign supreme.

LUCY REEVES, ninth, University H. S., Urbana
Charles P. Martin, teacher

WINTER HAPPENINGS

Paths in the wilderness; trails in the woods;
Stars in the sky; moon with a hood
Of dark, massy clouds.

A wolf's on the hill, singing his song,
A deep, throaty howl, which lingers quite long
In the still winter's air.

An eagle is circling a snow-covered peak,
Famine's come calling: he's becoming quite weak;
He falls to the ground.

A white hare is sitting, his ears straight and tall,
This snow is the worst that there's been since the fall;
He takes care.

The sun now is rising, lighting the day,
But soon it is darkened, huge clouds of grey
Cover its light.

On passes winter, with its days of grey,
Until water is everywhere, bright is the day,
It is gone.

KAREN BRICKEY, tenth, Decatur Sr. H. S.
(Mrs.) Elizabeth R. Rowden, teacher

LAKE STREET DAWN

The sun flashes ruddily
like burnished brass,
And turns the tracks up in the yards
to gilded, silvered bands.
It fires the dingy panes
of the Clybourn tenements,
and tints the stale bricks
to something fresh and clean.
The pearly, misty light
softens the thick thorny maze
of signs and wires and poles
to fragile spiders' webs.

The river flashes back the golden window light,
And the thousand basilisk eyes of the squatting Mart
are half-lidded, warm and drowsy.

DAVID GRINSTEAD, eleventh, Barrington H. S.
Helen Kientzle, teacher

REACH FOR GOD

O little spruce beside great pine,
Be not afraid to grow.
Lift high your arms in grateful praise
To One who made you so.

One day you too
Shall master, pine;
Stop not—fight on—
The world is thine.

The job is yours;
Begin today,
And from your purpose
Never sway.

From topmost branch
To roots in sod,
Break out—grow upward—
Reach for God.

NANCY WERRBACH, twelfth, Elgin H. S.
Kenneth Ettner, teacher

THE FIRST SNOW

The snow is clean;
The snow is white;
The snow falls softly
Through the night.

The snow is soft;
The snow's a toy
For every laughing
Girl and boy.

The snow is fair;
The snow is all;
O pity those where
There's no snowfall.

RUTH KATZIN, seventh, Plainfield Jr. H. S.
Marianne Scoggin, teacher

FLIGHT

Sprinklings of stars pulsate
With lonely light.

Fear severs jumbled

Thought-strings—

I listen

For the death rattle

Of a choking engine.

Motionless I hang

While earth speeds by.

I am alone—

Are you lonely too, God?

The red glow of cities

Seeps through the thick clouds

Then is gone.

Only the memory

Of shimmering lights

And great steel buildings remain.

The proud monument

To man's ascendancy

Cannot be seen.

Dense clouds insulate

Man against God

As man's armor

Forged by conformity

Protects him from man.

Air hisses

As descent begins.

The earth rushes to greet me,

Friendly in the cold night.

The clouds, the sky, the stars

Are hidden by the night—

And

God is still alone.

JAMES GILBERT, twelfth, Bloom Twp. H. S., Chicago Heights
Vera Kohlhoff, teacher

NIGHT

Slowly, silently it crept,
Darkening the eastern sky.

Its sound effects were whistling wind
And a screech owl's ghostly cry.
The barren trees a pattern made
And snow upon them lay
In huddling clumps like fallen clouds,
Now turned a fading gray.
A dark and heavy blanket
Across the country lay.
For, like a cat, the night had crept
To take the place of day.

JUNE COSSMANN, tenth, Naperville Com. H. S.
Dorothy Scroggie, teacher

A LOVELY LASS

While in the park one mid-spring day,
A lass came strolling down my way.
I tipped my hat as she strolled by,
And then she winked her big blue eye.

While walking home that lovely day
I almost-thought that I could say
I felt her strolling down my way.

But just as I was turning 'round,
I saw her walking, homeward bound.
I started after her to speak,
And then she strolled across the street.

But now I can see her any time,
For she lives in a house
With her child and mine.

MARILYN O'BRIEN, seventh, Cent. Jr. H. S., Decatur
Helen Hunsinger, teacher

NOVEMBER

November blew in bleak and bold;
Its days and nights both crisp and cold.

The autumn leaves so bright and gay
By wintry winds were whisked away.

How I miss the gold and red;
Now somber gray reigns in their stead.

The rasping branches bare and queer
Form silhouettes sharp and severe.

Against the gray November sky
Flocks of southbound geese go by.

Oh, I love autumn's rosy glows
And I love winter's soft white snows;

But I like not November days—
Drab and dull and cloaked in grays.

JUDY OZANNE, twelfth, Moline Sr. H. S.
Bess Barnett, teacher

A MODERN SPOON RIVER

(The five poems in this group were written by eleventh-grade students of Velma A. Ogg in Decatur High School.)

Jake Hill

Some say I was worthless—no good to anyone.
Perhaps I was, for most of my life was spent in prisons and
reformatories.
Here, however, I had time to think,
And at long last I began to realize my obligation to society.
When I offered myself as a guinea pig for a scientific experiment,
the warden said I might gain my freedom.
There was a chance, though, that I could lose my life.
I took that chance—perhaps it was my gambling instinct—and lost.
But I have no regrets
For above me I hear the footsteps of those who live because I lost
my greatest gamble.

—MARCIA DALBEY

John Miller

Here I lie in my oaken bed
Never again to rise.
My friends have come to pay their respects.
As I lie here, locked fast in death,
I hear them utter these words:
"A wonderful man who never did a wrong;
Too bad there aren't more like him."
Oh, how I laugh as I think of this,
For you see I was as bad as bad can be.

I had cheated my friends, but they never knew
Because I had concealed it so cleverly.
At the time I had no qualms of conscience,
But now, as eternity approaches,
I tremble, for I am afraid.
When the time comes for me to go,
Which way will I be sent?
I won't have to worry much longer now,
For the elevator is approaching.
The door opens, and I hear a voice speaks but two words:
"Going down!"

—BARBARA CASSELL

Arthur J. Swanson

I was rich,
I was powerful,
But was I happy?
No.
People admired me;
"What a fine man," they said.
And I accepted their adulations
With my practiced graciousness.
But alone with myself I was
Miserable and sick at heart.
So I did what I thought
Would bring an end to my miseries.
But again I failed,
For even now I am still sick—
Sick and sad unto eternity.
I see the faces and ruined lives
Of the people I stepped upon
To get to the top.
And where am I now?
For the rest of eternity I am
Doomed—
Doomed to remember
The evil that I have done.
Hell is not fire!

—DICK STEPHENS

Richard Britton

"He died in defense of his country."
The man who inscribed that on my stone
Spoke with the voice of untruth.

My death was caused neither by an enemy
Nor by a friend.
Everywhere I looked that fateful day, the Germans were
Breaking through our lines.
I had given up telling myself that I was not scared
Because I was a coward from the tips of my toes
To the dented helmet sitting on my head.
When the order came to retreat,
I was too scared to move a muscle.
On all sides of me Death was taking his toll
Of my buddies and the enemy.
"Why," I asked myself, "why should
I let the Germans have the pleasure of killing me?"
As I put the cold barrel of the pistol
To my head, it suddenly became
Deathly quiet.
From a long way off
I heard someone calling me.
I didn't answer but slowly squeezed
The trigger.
There was a blinding flash of pain
And then—darkness.
Just before I died, I heard that same
Voice call me once more,
"Hey, Britton, we just got word.
The war is over.
Germany has surrendered!"

—HAYDN GRIGGS

Emily Dickinson

As I lie here, I say to myself, "Emily, your life was not without
cause."
But it makes my face burn when I know that somewhere, someone
can see through my poetry.
When I wrote it, I did not intend for the whole world to read my
thoughts.
I wrote of my heartbroken life, for I could achieve happiness only
when I was writing.
As you read between the lines of my poems,
You can tell I never really wanted to give him up.
After I lost him, I had only my poetry.
But now as I lie here in my grave, my soul is at peace

For I know my love will soon walk beside me,
And even though there are no marriages in Heaven,
There *is* love.

—ANN McLAUGHLIN

A TEENAGER LOOKS AT THANKSGIVING

We hear so much of gloom and doubt and fear;
Our elders dread tomorrow with its clouds.
Our generation has no future in this world,
And we are weak. These thoughts are everywhere.
But as I look about, I see and feel
The challenge of our time, the pulse of life.
And, looking up, I thank my Lord above
For life and for my heritage of faith.
If I am weak, I need but look to those
Who went before to blaze the rugged way,
Who gave themselves for freedom's cause and threw
Aside their love of self for love of God
And dignity and brotherhood of man.
And though the clouds of hatred gather still,
And threat of war is ever with mankind,
Some with vision yet press on and up;
And this I know—'tis good to live today.

MYRA SMITHSON, tenth, East Alton-Wood River H. S.
Helen Christoe, teacher

PLACES ON THE MAP

PARIS . . .

A glamorous model
Leaves the salon of Christian Dior;
She comes home to dress for dinner
And with her husband leaves for the Moulin Rouge.

HONOLULU . . .

The owner of the biggest sugar plantation
Enters his home;
He is greeted by his Hawaiian servants;
They enchant him with their sweet singing
And surround him with tropical flowers.

MEXICO CITY . . .

A rich man

Sits in his palace figuring his

Silver mine's income for the day ;

Later he reads the financial news to

See how his oil stock is selling.

NAPLES . . .

The fat Italian housewife is

Preparing for the Saturday night pizza party ;

All the neighbors come, bringing

Their families to spend the evening

Eating, laughing, drinking, and singing.

KAY OMAN, ninth, Barrington H. S.
Maude Strauss, teacher

MY PRAYER

I thank you, dear heavenly Father,

For the blessings you give me each day,

For freedom, for churches, for pastors,

That help us along our way.

For shelter, for food, and for parents

Who won't let us go astray.

I'll never be able to thank you enough

For the blessings you give me each day.

I love my father, my mother,

My teacher, and brother too,

But best of all I love You, Lord,

I hope You love me too.

JUDY DOWNING, seventh, Cent. J.H.S., Decatur
Helen Hunsinger, teacher

THE JUVENILE

When other people push, I shove ;

Most people walk, but I run.

While boys my age sleep, I run the street ;

At being wrong, I'm all right.

Stop the world and look at me ;

I'm the juvenile.

GEORGE FELL, twelfth, Kansas H. S.
Tressa Bennett, teacher

OUR BLOCK

Attractive houses line our street.
Their lawns are trim, their hedges neat,
And picture windows scarcely hide
How much alike they are inside.

1502 Old folks live there.

A selfish, childless, lonely pair,
With only themselves to satisfy,
It seems as if life's passed them by.

1504 A bride and groom

Are planning a baby's room;
Their gaiety brings to older hearts again
A smile, a tear, a wistful pain.

1506 Three little boys

A cat and a dog, a house full of noise;
But when all is quiet and day is done,
We miss their laughter and wholesome fun.

1508 A mother is dying there.

Her pain is lessened by constant prayer
That her boy in service come home again
But her husband knows that she waits in vain.

Just an average street in an average town
Where a casual stranger walking down
Would never guess there was so much giving
Of joy and pain in everyday living.

MARIE ALESSIO, eleventh, J. Sterling Morton H. S., Cicero
Grace Gaarder, teacher

FIRST LOVE

I've got an awful crush on you;
I really think you're best.
I know that what I say is true;
You've passed my toughest test.

You make my heart to flutter so;
You're really "on the beam."
For this romance will last I know;
We really make a team.

Your mouth is like a perfect rose;
Your eyes are starry bright.
I'm awfully glad my mother knows;
This way we never fight.

I shiver at your very name;
You've really made me fall.
I know you feel the very same,
Dear mirror on the wall.

SANDY HOGG, tenth, Moline Sr. H. S.
Robert D. Knees, teacher

HUNTING

The fall arrives and turns the leaves to gold,
Putting the chill of winter in the air.
The woods and fields abound in colors bold
As trees begin to shed their summer wear.

This lovely world is shelter to the ones
Inhabiting the wild. Their speed and grace
Combine to form true beauty like the sun's
Own ray which plays upon the leafy lace.

This peace of world is broken by the sport
Of hunting men who long to try their skill
And track the beasts around their wooden fort
Until they flush their game and make their kill.

How sad it is with beauty such as this
That Man must kill what God will surely miss!

CARL ISGREN, twelfth, Peoria H. S.
Emily E. Rice, teacher

THE WOODLAND FLOWER

It is the miracle of being that makes one
Love the common woodland flower.
It stretches its succulent roots
Far down into the good, rich earth.
Its green stem pierces the soft soil.
With the first blow of spring rain
Its delicate buds burst into bloom,
And with its fair simplicity it
Brings life to the drab world.

From a dull clod of clay in the field
Bobs a dainty daisy, delighting a passing butterfly.
The childish cowslip wakes her surroundings
With the fragrance of the soft perfume.
The lilting larkspur sways lazily in the summer breeze,
More beautiful than a vine of exotic orchids.
Out from beneath the crevice of rock,
The pasqueflower timidly peeks its head,
Surprising a sleepy frog resting on a nearby rock.

The shooting star on the overhanging cliff
Conceals her feelings, bowing gently in the balmy breezes.
In the peacefulness of the wooded land,
A patch of pale pink azaleas stands out against
A background of darkness.
The bluebell lifts her petite face,
Stretches her slender green arms outward,
And hugs a thin ray of sunlight streaming down through the
trees.

The violet turns her soft velvety face sideways
To watch the brook that trickles endlessly by.

Through March's drought, last week's windstorm, yesterday's
torrential rain,
The tiny flowers struggle to regain their footing in the soft
earth—
And then burst into bloom where winter left destruction.
It is the miracle of being that makes one
Love the common woodland flower.

NANCY COLLINS, eleventh, Rock Island H. S.
Carolyn Pierson Walker, teacher

MY CATHEDRAL

When I walk through the woods,
God is close by my side.
In His outdoor cathedral
I often abide.

I am not by myself
As I sit here and pray,
For the trees and the birds
And the sun watch all day.

Stately trees far above
Form the arch of my church.
They are oak, they are elm,
They are cedar and birch.

Tiny birds are the choir
With their anthems of love.
The bright sun is our priest
That is sent from above.

ROSALIE FROELICH, tenth, Rockford East H. S.
Adele Johnson, teacher

THE STAR FAIRY

Have you ever seen, on a bright summer's night,
A star fairy who is full of mischief and delight?
She daintily floats along
Making everything glow that comes into her sight.
From the top of her elfin head
To the tip of her twinkling toes,
With happiness she fairly glows,
What, don't you believe in fairies and the like?
You just look outside
On some bright summery night!

KYRA CORBRIDGE, ninth, Carthage H. S.
Mary Maberry, teacher

NATURE — MAN

As the closing night,
The thief, loving darkness.
As the life-giving sun,
The minister, spreading light.
Like the hanging fog,
The vagrant, unshaved, loathed.
Like the falling rain,
The business man, crisp, indifferent.
As the purest snow,
My mother, understanding, sweet.
As the inevitable, changeable nature,
The man, impregnable.

GORDON HALLBERG, twelfth, Moline H. S.
Miss Betty Roseberg, teacher

NIGHTTIME

I love to walk at nighttime
When evening shadows fall
And gaze upon this wondrous world
Where moonlight gathers over all.

CLAUDETTE PATHEAL, ninth, Johns Hill Jr. H. S., Decatur
Agnes C. Armstrong, teacher

AND FINALLY SHANGRI-LA

Ideas come in sheaves,
And thoughts become material
When a man writes a book.

I have three shelves
Well loaded with ideas.

There dwell the first thoughts I took as my own,
A crazy-quilt world of big and little and Gulliver.

And now and then I search for Friday,
Have no time for sergeants,
Live in Pompeii
Sink with the Titanic,
Laugh at Topsy,
Curse with Nero,
Dance with Scarlett,
Cry with Othello—and finally
Love in Shangri-La.

Ideas come in sheaves,
And thought becomes material.

DENNIS HUNT, eleventh, Rockford West Sr. H. S.
Maud E. Weinschenk, teacher

AUTUMN ROMANCE

A hayride in autumn,
A moon up above,
A hayrack of people—
A setting for love.

A boy like you,
 The present—no past—
 A girl like me—
 A suitable cast.

A hand in a hand,
 A laugh, a smile,
 An arm in an arm—
 Then after a while

A whispered message,
 A pause, a kiss,
 Two hearts all aflutter—
 Play ends in bliss.

CAROLE COLTEAUX, twelfth, Bloomington H. S.
 Lorraine Kraft, teacher

TWO

Two!
 Two pebbles lying together upon the white sand,
 The sand, each grain of which came from such as these.
 Washed up by the tide
 And time,
 They touch for but a moment,
 And then someone, upon passing,
 Chances upon the two, lying there.

When we see how, with gentle fingers disguised in the blood of
 friendship,
 One is taken away,
 Our dry voices cry out in meager protest
 And
 Are swallowed by the echoing wind,
 Drowned by the rushing of the sea,
 And lost in the mocking voices of eternity.

Two!
 Two pebbles lying separately
 On different shores, on separate seas,
 Yet washed by the same tide
 And time —
 Yes, time is inescapable as the furies of the souls of men.

Two pebbles lying upon the sands,
Two, two that touched for but a moment,
And then, then were broken apart.
Though it was for but a moment, these had eternity.
They have still what none can take away,
Neither time
Nor tide
Nor the sea
Nor the selfishness of man.

DUNCAN BRADLEY, eleventh, York C. H. S., Elmhurst
R. Warner Brown, teacher

A PATRIOT'S CHRISTMAS

The crimson blood of a patriot true
Taints the white Hungarian snow.
Though nature is festive with mantles of white,
A nation is weary with anguish and woe.
 'Tis Christmas Eve in this war-ridden land,
 But what heart can swell to a carol of fear?
 What lips can smile at a tree of good will
 When the tree is hung with cheap Godless cheer?
 The only soul in this battle-scarred hell
 Who can thrill to a carol and smile at a tree
 Is the patriot brave who died for the cause
 And found peace with God—eternally free.

MARY BETH VANDERVENNET, eleventh, Alleman H. S. Rock Island
Sister Mary Carlos, B.V.M., teacher

NIGHT

Night is a stealthy thief
Who lurks on the fringes of daylight.
Unnoticed, he descends
To snatch Apollo's gold.

SANDRA KOEPKE, twelfth, University H. S., Normal
Ruth Stroud, teacher

SPRING IS HERE

Little children running out,
Listen to the mother's shout.
Wonder not what time of year;
No doubt about it, spring is here.

Couples linger on their walk.
Across the fence the neighbors talk.
Wonder not what time of year;
No doubt about it, spring is here.

Families go out "Sunday driving."
Farmers see their fields are thriving.
Wonder not what time of year;
No doubt about it, spring is here.

SANDRA CLEM, tenth, Bloomington H. S.
Grace Schedel, teacher

WHAT IS POETRY?

Poetry is

Rhyme and rhythm,
Beauty and philosophy,
Man and nature,
Truth and fallacy,
Humor and tragedy

To create curiosity.

PAT SMITH, twelfth, Jacksonville H. S.
Emma Mae Leonhard, teacher

I AM ONE

My faults are too numerous to list.
My merits cannot be counted.
I am human.

I have lived for a million years.

I have lived in the minds and the hearts of my parents,
and my grandparents,
and my great-grandparents.

I have sung the songs of ancient Egypt
and walked the streets of New York.
I have sought my food in primitive forests
and on crowded shelves of the super-mart.

Fire,
animals,
the land,
the sky,
and the sea
are at my command.

For a million years,
I have watched the sun rise in the east
and set in the west.
My Gods have been many,
and my God has been one.
I have sinned and repented
and lived to sin again.

I have chosen mates and raised families and died—
Only to live on in the souls of my children.

I have seen my fellow man killed with arrows
and slaughtered with bombs.

I have committed many indiscretions.
I have often been wise,
sometimes heroic.

I have cowered in fear and screamed in pain.
I have known the ecstasy of love
and the bitterness of hatred.
I have lied and stolen and murdered.
For a million years
I have walked under a burden of guilt and sorrow.

I have laughed and I have cried for an eternity.
I have lived
and died
and lived on.

I shall live on till the world ceases to be.
I shall live in the hearts and the minds
of my children
and my grandchildren
and my great-grandchildren.

I shall continue to laugh and to cry,
to sin
and to worship.

I cannot be destroyed.
I am a human.

JUDY HOWARD, eleventh, York Com. H. S., Elmhurst
R. M. Leader, teacher

BRIGHT BLUE, LIGHT GREEN

I painted my room,
And escaped without harm.
There wasn't a drop of blue paint
On my arm.

There wasn't a bit of blue paint
On my blouse,
And I hadn't even
Messed up the house.

I hadn't spilled any blue paint
On the floor.
And I did a nice job
Of painting the door.

But here is the reason
I escaped so serene:
You see, the paint
Was a very light green!

LINDA SOFFRANKO, tenth, E. St. Louis H. S.
Marie Ginzel, teacher

'S FUNNY

's funny—after Thanksgiving
comes Christmas,
Which should have been before,
For there is not another
time
To be more thankful for
spicy cookies,
luscious pies,
quiet whispers,
sparkling eyes,
. . . sleep,

crinkling paper,
thrilling joy
at sight of every
hidden toy,
. . . love,
Christmas trees
all aglow,
just like all
the hearts we know,
. . . silence,
Christmas Eve,
glowing embers,
other times
one remembers,
. . . peace.

DIANE DE FOE, twelfth, York Com. H. S., Elmhurst
Eleanor A. Davis, teacher

ETCHING IN DUST

Crystal drops on a smoky window
Crawl
Slowly to the edge,
Make
Tiny furrows on dusty glass,
Streak
Tired grime with new cleanness,
Then
Slide as one into nothing.

ELLEN DIAMOND, twelfth, Evanston Twp. H. S.
Mrs. Charlotte Whittaker, instructor

ELVIS PRESLEY

Elvis has all
The girls a-twitter,
But between you and me
He's just a misfitter.

They scream and shout
Hour after hour,
But between you and me
Presley's milk's gone sour.

KARL MUNTZ, ninth, Streator H. S.
Lucille M. Tkach, teacher

ON READING WAR AND PEACE

Within my cold and quiet room, upon
The plains of Russia, armies battle once
Again. I sit amid the smoke and strife
While death and blood surround me, hear the screams
Of maimed men, and at the same time know
The peacefulness of now.
Here war and peace are co-existent. Are
These men illusion or reality?
Are they alive, or am I?

DENNIS PARICHY, twelfth, J. Sterling Morton H. S., Cicero
Marjorie Diez, teacher

JESUS

Heaven sent, perfect-child.
Look! He sheds no tear.
Hush! Be still—be not wild.
God's Son sleepeth here.

Sacred place, where He lies.
Angels hover near.
Adoration fills all eyes.
God's Son sleepeth here.

DONATA HEIDENRICH, eleventh, Ottawa Twp. H. S.
Vernon Adams, teacher

WOODLAND REFUGE

On days when I felt blue,
I'd climb the fence behind the Grange Hall
And run through the pasture,
Dodging trees,
Kicking leaves,
Scaring the sheep,
'Til I reached the ridge of the ravine.
Then I'd look down at the steep decline
Which embraced the creek at the bottom.
My tree would be there.
That old, old tree
Which neither lightning
Nor erosion
Nor wind
Could fell.

At its base where it began to lean
Precariously over the abyss below,
Its gnarled roots had formed a seat
Where I'd sit down
And look around
And forget my fear,
My ache,
My shame,
My depression.
For in this noisy stillness
Devoid of human corruption
I felt the nearness of God.

DOROTHY STARK, twelfth, Senn H. S., Chicago
Grace A. Lindahl, teacher

THE iTH DIMENSION

Mufflerless
through the night we race
my flathead six and I,
concrete reeling out under
the headlights,
engine roaring,
torquing out the miles.
Onward,
ripping, snarling through
the night,
eyes riveted on
the weaving road ahead . . .
a curve,
a crawler to pass,
an iron bridge . . .

Somewhere
governments fail;
old men die in bed;
dust is settling;
but not here.
This is another
dimension in
psychological
time space.

STEPHEN KNUDSON, eleventh, Evergreen Pk. H. S.
Ruth Knudson, teacher

THE RAINBOW

The clouds send forth the sprinkling showers
To freshen nature's trees and flowers,
And as the rain wanes and ceases to flow
The sky displays a vivid rainbow.

As eyes turn skyward to view the mist,
It's hard to believe such wonders exist;
Creation is silent, none utters a sigh,
For all can see God's power on high.

ERIKA SCHROIF, ninth, Sacred Heart H. S., Chicago
Sister Mary Andrea, teacher

TRIOLET

As snow falls softly like a veil,
It hides the bush and bends the bough.
Our steps are cushioned on the trail
As snow falls softly like a veil
And slowly fills each river dale.
The frosted world is transformed now
As snow falls softly like a veil
And hides the bush and bends the bough.

EVAN MYERS, eleventh, Naperville Com. H. S.
Leona McBride, teacher

LEST WE FORGET

Do we remember

That our nation was founded on
Christian principles?

George Washington kneeling in prayer
at Valley Forge,

A soldier wondering what his buddy
died for at Wake, Guam, or Iwo Jima,

A soldier's grave guarded by a cross
centered on it somewhere in France,

Centuries ago a star, proclaiming the
birth of a Soldier,

A cross which bore that Soldier so
that our sins would be forgiven,
offering eternal life—

Do we remember these things
at Christmas as Christian soldiers, for
who will remember if we forget?

BILL MARTIN, twelfth, Elgin H. S.
Nora B. Stickling, teacher

I TRAVEL TO BETHLEHEM

At Christmas I travel to Bethlehem, in spirit.
There I worship with the shepherds, in spirit.
I can hear the angels sing, "Glory to God in the highest,
Peace on earth, good will toward men."
Suddenly I seem to be there
Kneeling with the wise men before the manger.
What shall I give the Holy Child?
I have no worldly goods, no myrrh, no gold.
I know—I will give Him my heart, my hands, my tongue.
I look up and see Mary serenely smiling.
Suddenly, I am back in my room.
I think, "I must have been dreaming."
I look down.
Why, there is hay on my dress!

JUDY SCHRADER, eleventh, Jacksonville H. S.
Ruby Mann, teacher

MY EXCUSE

When there is school work to be done
With books to read that weigh a ton,
Do you know what bothers me?
It's all the noise from our TV.

CONNIE KOPF, ninth, Fulton Com. H. S.
Permelia Robinson Lay, teacher

IVY

The ivy on the dark wall glistens
In the sunset's glow,
The calm is such that one who listens
Almost hears it grow.

The vines are always creeping, creeping,
Reaching toward a goal,
And in those leaves it seems they're keeping
Something like a soul.

They never seem to be at peace
But always striving on.
Would that we all were more like these
Small leaves I look upon.

MARGIE CALHOUN, twelfth, Evanston Twp. H. S.
Mary L. Taft, teacher

STOP AND SEE

True beauty need not always be
The work of art or symphony ;
It need not be a mountain scene
Nor field of clover pink and green.
Though you do not travel far and wide,
You still find beauty at your side.

A golfer's perfect drive, a bowler's strike,
A fisherman's thrill as he lands a huge pike.
A happy puppy, a baby's laugh,
A favorite record on a phonograph:
These are things that hold beauty for me.
For you, well, just look around and see.

ROBERT HEGNER, eleventh, J. Sterling Morton H. S., Cicero
Louise Zerwer, teacher

SHADOWS

Shadows—
swinging in rhythm
with the wind.
Climbing along the rooftops high,
strong and unafraid,
prancing with the wind.
Cautiously peering
through timid grass,
slithering with the wind.

Slinking at the water's edge,
gliding over placid gray,
wavering with the wind.
Seeping silently
over fields of grain,
swaying with the wind.
Romping and darting,
skipping over low valleys and rounded hills,
frolicking with the wind.
Shadows—
prancing and dancing,
slipping and sliding,
swaying and playing
in rhythm
with the wind.

GLORIA FROBERY, tenth, East H. S., Rockford
Adele Johnson, teacher

WINGS

I know the loneliness of star-hung skies,
The sea, in calm and storm-swept tide.
My weathered wings have known the beat of rain.
My comrade is the wind on which I ride.
The men who fashioned me sang as they worked;
I am their song. I am a thing
That adds to the future's uncertainty;
A nation's dreams and fears ride on my wing.
I am a silver bridge, a bird of steel,
A power for evil or for good.
My cargo is the terrifying bomb
Or the strong handclasp of man's brotherhood.

MARY ANN RADNOR, ninth, Evanston Twp. H.S.
Elizabeth H. Bennett, teacher

HONORABLE MENTION

Aurora: "Philosophy," by Kari Kohn (Louise Lane).

Barrington: "I Am Lake Michigan," by Mary Sehnert (Maude Strouss).

Bloomington: "The Midnight Ride of Egbert McGoo," by John Redding; "Contemplation," by Carol Ogdon (Grace Schedel); "Night Traveler," by John Meister; "Reflections of Youth," by Ruth Giermann (Lorraine Kraft).

Carlinville: "A Stream's Music," by Donald Combs (Mary Hoyt Stoddard).

Carthage: "Interlude," by Loren Bivens; "A Parody," by Bonnie Johnson (Mary Maberry).

Chicago (Sacred Heart): "Fields of Peace," by Bernadette Bell (Sister Mary Andrea).

Chicago (Senn): "A Summer of Shadows," by Burton Manaster; "Priceless," by Sharon Friedman; "Night Visitor," by Patricia Alexopoulos (Grace A. Lindahl).

Cicero: "Beginnings," by Frank Stephan (Marjorie Diez); "Life," by Robert Plachy (Louise Zerwer).

Decatur: "Fiery Path," by David Hedger; "Winter," by Harvey Martin (Helen Hunsinger); "The Christmas Season," by Janet Scranton (Agnes Armstrong); "Moonglow," by Larry King (Velma Ogg); "Ode to a Lamppost," by William Chalmers (Jean Towell).

East Alton: "Tears," by David Grieve (Helen Christoe).

East St. Louis: "Experience," by Margie Hubbs (Marie Ginzel).

Elgin: "Simplicity," by Edward Stewart (Kenneth C. Ettner); "Lights," by Milo Nadler (Donald Quillman).

Elmhurst: "Fear," by Robert Blackwood (Irene Polson).

Evanston: "Antiquity," by Edwin Leeborg; "Loneliness," by Diane Cofoid; "Gothic Windows," by Iris Clark; "Mirrored Memory," by Laurel Barliant (Mary L. Taft); "Snow," by Anne Miner (Malcolm Mosing); "Evening Pageantry," by Mary Tingley (Elizabeth Bennett).

Evergreen Park: "The Grim Harvest," by Greg Voral (Ruth Knudson).

Franklin Grove: "Tribute to a King," by Patricia Eckhardt (Beryl S. Fish).

Galesburg: "Remnants," by Edmund Schliser (Virginia Hinchcliff).

Galva: "Mother's Diet," by Karen Stephenson; "Twilight," by Carolyn Krans (Mildred Lapan).

Genoa: "A Great Man," by Mary Lou Crawford; "May Day," by Theresa Louise Lianzi; "Time," by Theresa Roberts; "Snow," by Kenneth Bennett (Grace Wibking).

Granite City: "I Only Hope," by Phyllis McBrian (Gonnie Michaeloff).

Jacksonville: "Unknown," by Luci Lu Dodd; "What Is Love?" by Judy Sorrells (Emma Mae Leonhard).

Kansas: "Clouds," by Martha Scherer (Tressa Bennett).

Moline: "On This Eve," by Barbara Kay Colebaugh (Barbara Garst); "The Quest," by Judy Johnson; "Music," by Debby Black (Robert D. Knees); "Dream," by Cynthia Nelson (DeWayne Roush); "It Was Spring," by Judy Ozanne (Betty Roseberg); "Kitten," by Claudia Rae Keefer (Harold Griffith).

Mount Pulaski: "Years Unending," by Sonja Weller (Clara Martin).

Naperville: "Progress," by Boyd Berry; "Music," by Tom West (Leona McBride); "Tanka," by Walter Hodel; "The Huntress," by Kathleen Osborne (Dorothy Scroggie).

Normal: "Tears," by Donna Chism; "An Echo," by Helen Greer (Ruth Stroud).

Ottawa: "The Road of Life," by Sally Smith (Vernon Adams).

Peoria: "The Hunter," by Carl Burrows (Emily E. Rice).

Rockford: "One Lonely Tree," by Peter Lonsway; "While Night Reigns," by Lorraine Anderson (Adele Johnson); "Seasons," by Priscilla Green; "Tiger," by Judy Segerlind; "A Lone Skater," by Nancy Dokken (Edna Youngquist); "A Sonnet," by Rosalie McDaniels; "Rejuvenation," by Judy Jacobs; "Strong Man of Escape Street," by Mary Elizabeth White; "Triolet," by Kathleen Thompson (Maude E. Weinschenk); "The Rifle," by Roger Frech (Mary Hills).

Rock Island: "Remembering," by Pan Denger; "Books," by Sandra Blackman (Virginia Harrod); "Snowflake," by Edith Van Daele (Sister Mary St. Majella, B.V.M.); "Christmas Stocking," by Joyce Heirhaege (Sister Louise, O. S. B.); "A Forest Remembers," by John Turnbull (Sister Mary Carlos, B.V.M.); "Put Christ Back Into Christmas," by Preston Richardson (Sister Loyola, O. S. B.).

Shabbona: "Winter," by Sandra Osland; "Colored Christmas Trees," by Carol Craig (Mary Bower).

Springfield: "Comparison," by Sandra Roellig (Nancy C. Thimos).

Streator: "My Mother," by Carol Kolesar (Lucille Tkach); "Family vs. TV," by Bob Steinberg (Faye Homrighaus).

Sycamore: "Snow," by Melva Clark (Margaret Adams).

Urbana: "Summer," by Elizabeth Roberts (Marian Seward).

Wenona: "Autumn," by Gloria Manley (Marcia Wright).